

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 ACDA-07 OMB-01 OES-06

CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 ERDE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7351

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CINCUSNAVEUR IMMEDIATE

INFO CNO WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR IMMEDIATE

COMSIXTHFLT IMMEDIATE

USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 7441

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, MNUC, SP

SUBJECT: NPW VISITS TO SPANISH PORTS AND GIBRALTAR

REF: MADRID 7394 (DTG 281018Z SEP 76).

1. I HAD A VERY SATISFACTORY CONVERSATION WITH FIRST VICE PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT LT. GENERAL GUTIERREZ MELLADO MORNING SEPTEMBER 29. I WENT OVER THE WHOLE QUESTION OF THE NIMITZ AND ITS ACCOMPANYING SHIP, SOUTH CAROLINA, SO THAT HE WOULD KNOW IN DETAIL HOW THIS WHOLE MATTER HAD EVOLVED. I EXPLAINED TO HIM THAT IN CONNECTION WITH MANEUVERS NOW TAKING PLACE, THE SHIPS INVOLVED INCLUDING NIMITZ AND SOUTH CAROLINA WOULD PUT INTO PORTS IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER FOR CREW REST. I POINTED OUT TO HIM THAT 24 UNITS OF THE SIXTH FLEET WOULD BE IN EIGHT DIFFERENT PORTS IN SPAIN ON OCTOBER 1 AND THAT IN THE ABSENCE OF SPANISH APPROVAL
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FOR PORT VISITS BY NPWS, NIMITZ AND SOUTH CARLONA

NECESSARILY HAD TO GO TO GIBRALTAR. I ADDED THAT HAD THIS MATTER OF NPW VISITS BEEN RESOLVED PREVIOUSLY, THIS WOULD HAVE CHANGED THE SITUATION. I ADDED THAT AT THIS LATE HOUR NO OTHER SOLUTION REMAINED TO US BUT TO HAVE NIMITZ AND SOUTH CAROLINA MAKE THE GIBRALTAR VISIT AS SCHEDULED.

2. I TOLD GUTIERREZ MELLADO THAT SEVERAL NPWS HAD VISITED GIBRALTAR IN JULY AND THERE HAD BEEN NO COMMENT BY GOS. I HAD INFORMED PITA DA VEIGA ABOUT THIS VISIT OF NIMITZ TO GIBRALTAR ONLY OUT OF COURTESY TO HIM SINCE HE HAD BEEN INVITED TO PAY A VISIT TO NIMITZ SEPTEMBER 29 OR 30. I FRANKLY FELT THAT TO RETURN MY COURTESY WITH A PUBLIC STATEMENT OR DIPLOMATIC PROTEST BY OREJA WAS A SOMEWHAT ODD WAY OF RECIPROCATING THAT COURTESY AND CERTAINLY IT WOULD NOT BE VERY HELPFUL TO EITHER THE U.S. OR SPAIN.

3. GUTIERREZ MELLADO THANKED ME FOR MY FULL EXPOSITION AND SAID THAT ALTHOUGH OREJA HAD SPOKEN TO HIM IN GENERAL TERMS, HE HAD NOT KNOWN THE FULL BACKGROUND. HE AGREED THAT THE OPERATIONS OF THE SIXTH FLEET WERE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO SPAIN IN THE CONTEXT OF THE OVERALL DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. HE ALSO RECOGNIZED THE NEED FOR FLEXIBILITY IN THESE OPERATIONS. HE HAD BEEN BROUGHT INTO THIS QUESTION AT THE LAST MINUTE, BUT HE WOULD LIKE TO BE HELPFUL. HE SAID WE WOULD UNDERSTAND THAT THE GIBRALTAR VISIT WAS NOT WELCOME TO THE GOS BECAUSE (A) THE POLITICAL PROBLEM AND (2) POSSIBLE PUBLIC REACTION TO THE PRESENCE OF AN NPW IN AN AREA INVOLVING THE ALGECIRAS WATERS. AT THE SAME TIME, HE UNDERSTOOD THAT AT THIS VERY LATE DATE, IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE ANY CHANGE. HE TOLD ME THAT HE HAD SPOKEN TO ADM. PITA DA VIEGA WHO TOLD HIM THAT THE SPANISH NAVY WAS STILL AWAITING TECHNICAL INFORMATION FROM THE U.S. NAVY AND ALSO HOPED TO HAVE THE COLLABORATION OF A TECHNICAL EXPERT FROM THE U.S. NAVY. GUTIERREZ MELLADO ASSURED ME THAT THERE WAS A FAVORABLE DISPOSITION IN THE NAVY AND HE IMPLIED ALSO BY HIMSELF TOWARD

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APPROVAL OF NPW VISITS TO SPANISH PORTS. WHEN I TOLD HIM THAT I UNDERSTOOD IT MAY TAKE THE SPANISH NAVY SEVERAL MONTHS MORE TO MAKE ITS RECOMMENDATION, HE INDICATED THAT THE PROCESS MIGHT BE SPEEDED UP. HE SAID HE ASSUMED THAT IF NPWS COULD VISIT SPANISH PORTS ON A REGULAR BASIS, WE WOULD HAVE LESS REASON TO VISIT GIBRALTAR. TO THIS I REPLIED THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD WE GIVE ANY GUARANTEE THAT WE

WOULD NOT CONTINUE TO VISIT GIBRALTAR, BUT THAT OBVIOUSLY, ACCESS BY NPWS TO SPANISH PORTS WOULD REDUCE THE REQUIREMENT FOR MORE FREQUENT VISITS TO GIBRALTAR. GUTIERREZ MELLADO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT FLEET OPERATIONS WOULD REQUIRE FLEXIBILITY IN THIS RESPECT.

4. GUTIERREZ MELLADO THEN ASKED ME WHAT I WOULD LIKE HIM TO DO WITH RESPECT TO THIS MATTER.

5. I TOLD HIM THAT I WOULD LIKE HIM (A) TO UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT THE FACT THAT NIMITZ AND SOUTH CAROLINA WOULD NOW VISIT GIBRALTAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1 AS PLANNED AND (B) TO GET IN TOUCH WITH OREJA TO TELL HIM OF OUR CONVERSATION AND TO CONVINCE HIM THAT IT WOULD NOT BE USEFUL TO MAKE ANY PUBLIC ISSUE OF THESE VISITS.

6. GUTIERREZ MELLADO, WHO WAS MOST FRIENDLY THROUGHOUT THIS CONVERSATION, SAID THAT HE DID UNDERSTAND THAT IT WAS TOO LATE TO MAKE ANY CHANGE IN THE GIBRALTAR VISITS. HE PROMISED ME THAT HE WOULD IMMEDIATELY GET IN TOUCH WITH PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ AND EXPLAIN THE MATTER TO HIM AND SEEK HIS AUTHORIZATION TO CALL OREJA ALONG THE LINES THAT I HAD REQUESTED. HE ADDED THAT HE THOUGHT THE ONLY POSSIBILITY OF SOME PUBLIC STATEMENT WOULD OCCUR IF THE PRESS MADE AN ISSUE OF THE NIMITZ VISIT TO GIBRALTAR. IN THAT CASE, SOME PRO FORMA STATEMENT MIGHT HAVE TO BE MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT PROTESTING THE VISIT, BUT HE COULD ASSURE ME THAT HE WOULD USE HIS INFLUENCE TO MAKE IT AS MODERATE AS POSSIBLE SINCE HE BELIEVED THAT TO STIR THIS MATTER UP WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL IN EFFORTS NOW UNDER WAY WITHIN GOS TO RESOLVE FAVORABLY THE QUESTION OF NPW VISITS TO SPANISH PORTS.

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7. IN VIEW OF THE SATISFACTORY NATURE OF MY CONVERSATION WITH GUTIERREZ MELLADO, I DO NOT INTEND TO SPEAK TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS UNDERSECRETARY SOLANO AS I HAD INDICATED IN PARAGRAPH 4, REFTEL. STABLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NUCLEAR POWERED SHIPS, MILITARY VISITS, PORTS, MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MADRID07441
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760367-0771
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976098/aaaaagkm.tel
Line Count: 160
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 MADRID 7394
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 OCT 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 OCT 2003 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <06 JAN 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NPW VISITS TO SPANISH PORTS AND GIBRALTAR
TAGS: PFOR, MARR, MNUC, SP, US, (MELLADO, GUTIERREZ)
To: STATE DOD
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006